

Message Text

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14-12

ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 PM-03 ISO-00 CIAE-00 H-02 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00

NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01 AID-05

ACDA-05 MC-02 TRSE-00 /067 W
----- 047872

R 070605Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2916

INFO SECDEF WASHDC//ISA//

USCINCEUR//ECJ4/7-SAME//

DA WASHDC//DALO-ILS//

CDR AMC ALEX VA

CDR MICOM REDSTONE ARS AL

COMIDEASTFOR

C O N F I D E N T I A L KUWAIT 1939

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2

TAGS: MASS, KU

SUBJ: AIRBORNE TOW

REF: A. STATE 094175 DTG 232334Z APR 75

B. MICOM 271900Z JAN 75 (NOTAL)

C. KUWAIT 1739 DTG 211245Z APR 75

SUMMARY: EMBASSY RELUCTANT TO ADVISE GOK THAT IT SHOULD NOT ATTEMPT INSTALL TOW ON GAZELLE HELICOPTER WITHOUT PROVIDING ALTERNATIVE. REQUESTS AGAIN INFO RE PRICE AND AVAILABILITY OF COBRA, ARMED WITH TOW, AND SEEKS AUTHORIZATION TO PROPOSE KUWAIT PURCHASE UNDER FMS PROGRAM. END SUMMARY.

1. REFTEL (A) IS CAUSE OF CONCERN LOCALLY ON SEVERAL GROUNDS:

A) AS STATED REFTEL (C), DELAY IN ANSWER TO MINDEF REQUEST IS CREATING SUSPICIONS RE USG WILLINGNESS ASSIST GOK. INFO CONTAINED REFTEL (A) WILL TEND CONFIRM SUSPICION.

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B) ASSERTION THAT INSTALLATION "MAY BE TECHNICALLY FEASIBLE" WILL GENERATE CONCERN OVER BASIC CREDIBILITY OF USG. REFTEL (B) PASSED TO AMEMBASSY AND DA BY CDR AMC 281911Z JAN 75 STATED:

"1. (C) APPLICATION OF AIRBORNE TOW SYSTEM (XM65) TO THE GAZELLE HELICOPTER IS TECHNICALLY FEASIBLE."

THIS INFO ALREADY PASSED MINDEF.

C) TREATMENT ACCORDED GOK BY USG, AS COMPARED TO GOVERNMENT OF IRAN COULD ADD TO KUWAITI SUSPICIONS.

2. USG ALREADY HAS ACCEDED TO GOK REQUEST FOR MODERN ANTI-TANK MISSILE (TOW). UNDER CIRCUMSTANCES, ONLY AREA WHERE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF KUWAITI NEED CAN BE IN QUESTION IS FOR HELO PLATFORM. US ARMY ALREADY HAS FOUND SUCH REQUIREMENT VALID. EMBASSY BELIEVES THIS FINDING CANNOT BE CHALLENGED NOW WITH ANY DEGREE OF CREDIBILITY.

3. AS STATED REFTEL (C), EMBASSY BELIEVE GOK HAS MADE A POOR HELO CHOICE. REASONS ARE AS FOLLOWS:

A) FRENCH-BUILT GAZELLE IS EXCELLENT LIGHT OBSERVATION HELICOPTER, BUT ADDITION OF WEIGHT, ETC., OF TOW WILL SERIOUSLY DEGRADE PERFORMANCE.

B) VISIBILITY PROBLEMS CAUSED BY SIDE-BY-SIDE SEATING WILL CAUSE DIFFICULTIES IN USE.

C) GAZELLE EXTREMELY VULNERABLE TO SMALL ARMS FIRE.

D) IF ARMED WITH TOW, RESULT WILL BE A SECOND-RATE OBSERVATION HELO AND A SECOND-RATE ARMED HELO.

BEGIN XGDS.

4. GOK HAS RECEIVED FRENCH PROPOSAL TO INSTALL HOT MISSILE SYSTEM ON GAZELLE. FYI: HOT MISSILE SYSTEM IS SIMILAR TO TOW (WIRE GUIDED), 4000 METER RANGE. END FYI. PRICE FOR CONFIDENTIAL

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INSTALLATION AND SIGHT NOT KNOWN TO US. DOD REP HAS BEEN PERMITTED VIEW FRENCH QUOTES ON MISSILES. IN SPRING PRICE WAS APPROX DOLLARS 5000 EACH, IN OCTOBER, QUOTE WAS US DOLLARS 10,000 EACH. END XGDS.

5. EMBASSY REQUEST FOR P AN A ON TOW-EQUIPPED AH1J IS BASED ON: (A) GOK INTEREST: AND (B) EMBASSY DESIRE TO HAVE RESPECTABLE ALTERNATIVE TO HOT/TOW-EQUIPPED GAZELLE.

6. INFO CONTAINED REFTEL (A) THAT STATE CANNOT PROVIDE ADVANCE COMMITMENT ON LICENSE INTERESTING, BUT WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED CREDIBLE BY GOK. QUESTION OF WHY AUTHORITY WHICH CAN AUTHORIZE EXPORT ON FMS CASE BUT CANNOT AUTHORIZE ON COMMERCIAL BASIS IS TOO DIFFICULT FOR US TO ANSWER CONVINCINGLY.

7. GOK WILL HAVE AN ANTI-TANK, MISSILE-EQUIPPED HELO. TO GOK ONLY QUESTION IS SOURCE. EMBASSY WOULD PREFER TO RESPOND TO GOK THAT USG: (A) DOES NOT RECOMMEND TOW ON GAZELLE; (B) IT WILL ACCEDE IF PRESSED ON THE MATTER; AND, (C) IF OFFERS AH1J WITH TOW AS ALTERNATE.

8. ACTION REQUESTED:

A) RESOLVED DIFFERENCE OF OPINION RE TECHNICAL MATTERS BETWEEN DEPARTMENT AND DA/AMC.

B) PROVIDE P AND A ON AH1J WITH TOW.
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NNN

Message Attributes

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